

IV. General Remarks Concerning This Response

Claims 1-54 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 1, 9, 17, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50 have been amended; no claims have been added or canceled herein.

5 Claim 40 is amended to correct typographical errors as requested in the Office action.

The current Office action noted a problem with the indicated locations of some amended paragraphs in the preliminary amendment; various paragraphs have been amended herein. An
10 Office action in a related co-pending patent application contained several requests for corrections to the specification; for example, several errors in the specification concerning reference numbers were noted by the Office action; the specification has been corrected herein. The Office action also
15 noted that the abstract was too long; a new abstract is being submitted herein. A set of formal drawings are being submitted by mail separately from this response.

V. 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)-Anticipation-French et al.

20 The Office action has rejected claims 1-6, 8-14, 16-22, and 24-54 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by French et al., "System and Method for Authentication of Network Users with Preprocessing", U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2001/0001877 A1, filed 05/20/1999, published on 05/24/2001. This
25 rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 9, 17, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50 have been amended to include additional features that are not shown in French et al.. For example, each independent claim now includes
30 a feature that states that such that the instructions perform functionality representing a registration authority and/or a certificate authority.

More importantly, each independent claim now includes a feature that states that "any of the software modules are

adaptively configurable to perform specifiable functionality in the management of the digital certificate". As discussed throughout the specification of the present patent application, the software modules of the present invention can be configured in a queue-like manner, wherein each software module may act or may not act on a request event prior to propagating an event to another software module. The ability to distribute PKI-related actions with respect to a given digital certificate across multiple systems provides a dynamic, modular approach to fulfilling requests for actions with respect to a digital certificate, such as approving the issuance of a digital certificate, generating a digital certificate, publishing a digital certificate, etc..

French et al. clearly does not disclose features as required by the language of the amended claims of the present application. As stated at MPEP § 2131: "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Hence, for this and other reasons, French et al. cannot be used as an anticipatory reference, and the rejections of the claims have been overcome, whereby Applicant requests the withdrawal of the rejections.

VI. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)—Obviousness—French in view of Carter

The Office action has rejected claims 7, 15, and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as anticipated by French et al. in view of Carter, "Maintaining a soft-token private key store in a distributed environment", U.S. Patent No. 6,738,907 B1, filed 01/20/1998, issue on 05/18/2004. This rejection is traversed.

Carter is relied upon merely for teaching the use of an LDAP directory for publishing digital certificates. As noted above, the independent claims have been amended to include novel features that are not disclosed in French et al.. Hence, a hypothetical combination of French et al. and Carter fails to teach the features of the amended dependent claims. Hence, for this and other reasons, French et al. and Carter cannot be used in an obviousness rejection, whereby Applicant requests the withdrawal of the rejections.


VII. Conclusion

It is respectfully urged that the present patent application is patentable, and Applicant kindly requests a Notice of Allowance.

For any other outstanding matters or issues, the examiner is urged to call or fax the below-listed telephone numbers to expedite the prosecution and examination of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,


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